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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

William Colby Replies

Ralph W. McGehee's "version of what happened in Vietnam ["Colby's Vietnam: History Misrepresented," op-ed, May 5] is, quite simply, false. There is neither space nor need to refute each of Mr. McGehee's gross misrepresentations since I have already done so in sworn testimony and in writing. Suffice it to say that my direct responsibilities with respect to Vietnam, both there and in Washington, over a period of more than 15 years (1959 to 1975) have given me a more reliable basis for analysis than Mr. McGehee's brief tour there. For example, during my travels to every part of that country, I never met those "objective Vietnamese experts" to attest to a North Vietnamese "great reluctance" to fight South Vietnam. Certainly their grenades tossed into village mar-

ketplaces, their mortar barrages of refugee centers and their tanks that forced their way into Saigon's Presidential Palace hardly evidenced any "great reluctance."

The immediate disappearance after the war of the South Vietnamese communist organizational facade, the continuing presence of massive North Vietnamese regular forces and communist administrators in the "unified" south; and the desperate, dangerous exodus in leaky boats of hundreds of thousands of brave Vietnamese seeking escape from their tormentors, all point unmistakably to the true originators, perpetrators and, regrettably, winners of the Second Indochinese War, 1960-1975.

W. E. COLBY
New York

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THE WASHINGTON STAR (GREEN LINE)
15 May 1981

CORD MEYER

Casey Picks Amateur for Most Sensitive CIA Job

In some of its choices for senior positions in its foreign policy establishment, the ways of the Reagan administration are wondrous to behold. Just as State Department officers were beginning to recover from the appointment of a Reagan confidant without any foreign experience as deputy secretary of state, the CIA was stunned this week by the selection of a rank amateur to head its most sensitive directorate.

Reaching outside the professional cadre of trained and experienced intelligence officers, CIA Director William Casey has rejected the unanimous advice of old intelligence hands by appointing a New Hampshire businessman and Reagan political operative, Max Hugel, as deputy director for operations (DDO).

This government job was once described by columnist Stewart Alsop with only slight exaggeration as "the most difficult and dangerous after the president's." The man in this position has the responsibility for directing all the agency's secret overseas operations from recruiting spies inside Russia, to secretly penetrating the international terrorist networks, to conducting covert political activities. Allen Dulles, Richard Helms and William Colby all held this job before subsequently becoming CIA directors, but they earned their promotion by many years in intelligence assignments.

The DDO's most formidable opponent and main competitor on the world stage is the head of the KGB's First Chief Directorate, who controls in Russian embassies a corps of KGB professional officers four times the size of the CIA's overseas presence.

Incredible to KGB

The KGB chiefs in Moscow will find it incredible that the Americans should entrust the DDO responsibility to someone with virtually no previous experience, and they are undoubtedly searching their files for evidence of Mr. Hugel's role as a longtime undercover agent. They will find nothing of the sort.

It is no reflection on Hugel's business acumen in amassing a small fortune from the construction of a sewing machine company to point out that his only prior experience with intelligence was a brief stint at the end of World War II with military intelligence. As one Pentagon general commented, "The DDO office is no place for on-the-job training."

There is perhaps no position in the U.S. government where the accumulated memory of past successes and failures and deep familiarity with the individual strengths and weaknesses of hundreds of staff officers are so essential. The DDO has to be both leader and manager, and his ability to inspire confidence among his troops depends on his record of achievement in intelligence.

A Dicey Business

If President Reagan follows through on his intention to build up the covert political action and paramilitary resources of the CIA, this appointment is all the more surprising. As other presidents have learned, covert intervention in foreign countries can be a dicey business. The decision to intervene depends in the first instance on the DDO's judgment on whether the gains outweigh the risks.

In the only other case where a CIA director reached so far outside the ranks of the operations directorate, Allen Dulles selected a bright economist, Richard Bissell, to be DDO. Intellectually brilliant but lacking in operational experience, Bissell became the unfortunate architect of the Bay of Pigs.

In the staffs of the Senate and House intelligence committees and among friendly European intelligence services, there is concern that this appointment may further politicize the CIA. Hugel first came to Casey's attention during the presidential campaign as the result of his success in organizing ethnic groups behind Reagan's candidacy. Casey is convincing in his denial that the appointment is a political payoff, but the Democrats would find it hard to resist the temptation to replace Hugel with a political choice of their own the next time around. Step by step, the apolitical objectivity on which the agency used to pride itself is being undermined.

When confronted with these fears, Casey explains that after reviewing the qualifications of all senior operational officers he concluded that only Hugel had the required drive and ability. Casey may have been influenced by his experience in World War II when Wild Bill Donovan collected a group of talented amateurs to run U.S. intelligence.

But that was 40 years ago and the Soviets now present a more formidable challenge. Casey may yet prove to be right in choosing an able amateur for the agency's toughest job. But it's a breathtaking gamble for which the country will have to pay heavily if Casey has guessed wrong.

RADIO-TV REPORTS

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FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM After Hours STATION WDV-M-TV

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SUBJECT Intelligence and National Security

GORDON PETERSON: Our guests this evening, William Colby, formerly of the CIA, and Richard J. Barnet, who has written in the issue before the current one of The New Yorker about national security. We'll be talking about that.

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PETERSON: Please welcome now to After Hours in the Channel 9 newsroom Mr. William Colby. Mr. Colby was Director of Central Intelligence from 1973 to '76, has considerable background in the Far East, including Vietnam. He's a lawyer. And during World War II he was with the OSS, along with former British Army Captain Tom Braden. Mr. Colby twice parachuted behind German lines, I'm told.

I can't get this...

TOM BRADEN: Can I ask him a couple of questions, just to set his background?

PETERSON: Sure.

BRADEN: Bill Colby was Director of the CIA, was a World War II hero.

And it has bothered me, Bill, as an old friend and comrade in arms, that during the last two years you've been viciously attacked by the left and viciously attacked by the right. Now, I just want to ask you these two questions.

Mr. de Borchgrave, In his roman a clef, suggests to anyone who knows Washington and who knows the principal characters in

our town and in our country that you are a mole within the CIA. Did that charge -- that's the charge from the right. Now, did that charge bother you?

Now, the other charge, that comes from the left...

PETERSON: Well, could we get an answer to charge one before we go on to charge two?

PAT BUCHANAN: Can he tell us if he's a mole for the Soviet Union?

PETERSON: Are you a mole?

WILLIAM COLBY: I am not a mole.

BUCHANAN: Okay.

BRADY: What'd you think of de Borchgrave's...

COLBY: I think it's nonsense. De Borchgrave doesn't understand American politics, which is that from time to time it goes to the right or it goes to the left. And the key to American politics is to establish a relationship and an understanding on the part of the public with what you're doing.

Now, problem of intelligence was that it was much too secret for many years, so that the focus came on the exciting parts of intelligence.

BUCHANAN: Well, you're talking about, then, the fact that when you were CIA Director, you were the ones that had to deliver the so-called family jewels to the Congress of the United States?

COLBY: I had to try to show that we were responsive to American constitutional government. This is a very novel idea in the world of intelligence, that you be subject to your constitution.

BUCHANAN: Did not the committee conclude that you had not been?

COLBY: The committee concluded that I had been responsive to what they asked.

BUCHANAN: When I say you I mean the CIA.

BRADEN: The CIA had not been.

COLBY: What the committee basically concluded was that Congress hadn't done its job, over about 20 years, of supervising

intelligence.

BUCHANAN: They used the term rogue elephant to describe the agency. Do you think that's fair?

COLBY: No, no. That was...

BUCHANAN: Church did.

COLBY: Church suggested that that might be the case, and he's the guy who signed the report that said that CIA was not out of control.

PETERSON: By definition, isn't intelligence supposed to be secret? I mean it isn't intelligence anymore.

COLBY: There are supposed to be secrets. But the old tradition of intelligence was that it was totally secret, totally at the command of the President, the Prime Minister, the King, and totally out of control of the legislature and so forth.

We Americans have developed something very novel: that we can have an intelligence service that has its secrets, and yet is subject to our constitutional separation of powers.

BRADEN: And Mr. de Borchgrave doesn't understand that.

COLBY: And he doesn't understand it.

BUCHANAN: And yet I've heard this, though, that...

COLBY: And some of my old friends don't understand it, either.

BUCHANAN: Subsequent to the revelations, etcetera, that a lot of our sources overseas, a lot of our contacts and communication with foreign intelligence agencies, they simply cut off the CIA because they don't know whether their secrets can be kept any longer. Is this true? Has the agency been damaged?

COLBY: That's right. It has. It has been wounded. I don't think the wound has been fatal. I think we can heal it.

BUCHANAN: Who inflicted it?

COLBY: We Americans, and largely by the excitement and the exaggerations and sensationalism with which we surrounded our revisionism of 25 years of American history.

BUCHANAN: Is that the press? You blame the press, then.

COLBY: The press, the American people generally, and

intelligence itself for pretending that it could be totally secret in America.

PETERSON: If I were running an intelligence agency, I would want the enemy to think that my intelligence was totally unreliable. And if the press could pick up that notion, that would be fine.

COLBY: Oh, now. The function of intelligence today in America is to help our people understand the issues that they face around the world.

We had a great national debate a year ago about SALT. I happened to have been for it, and some of my old friends are against it. And we went around the country debating. But we didn't debate the number of warheads on a missile, the megatonnage, the throw weight, all that sort of thing, because it'd been established. And what the Soviets thought were secret weapons, we Americans discussed in an informed debate about what we ought to do about SALT.

Now, I was disappointed in the result. But nonetheless...

BUCHANAN: Let's talk about open information. What do you think of the activities of Philip Agee and people...

COLBY: I think he's a traitor, very simply.

BUCHANAN: He's the individual that exposes American agents abroad.

COLBY: I think he's a traitor. He's a man who went into CIA, undertook an obligation to keep secret the names of the people that he dealt with, and went out and decided that he was, self-appointed, eliminate CIA. I think we need a law that would send him to jail.

PETERSON: What about Louis Wolf, who was not a member of the CIA?

BUCHANAN: Do you know Louis Wolf with Covert Bulletin, or whatever is?

COLBY: I've testified next to Mr. Wolf and I disagree with him entirely.

BUCHANAN: Do you think he's a traitor?

COLBY: I don't think he's a traitor. I think he's very misguided. And I think that we ought to have a law that would punish someone who deliberately sets out to destroy and Intelligence agency, that the Congress and the people of the United

States decide that we need.

BRADEN: Let me ask you, Bill...

COLBY: We have laws that say that you cannot create mutiny in the armed forces. Why? Because we need an armed force and we need to protect it against mutiny. And we have a law that says you can go to jail.

BUCHANAN: The First Amendment does not protect instigation to mutiny.

COLBY: It doesn't protect it if there is a specific intent -- this is a very complicated legal...

BRADEN: Let me give...

COLBY: A specific intent to destroy the agency that the Congress set up.

BRADEN: Let me ask you the question that is thrown at you from the left. Here's my old friend Bill Colby, Director of CIA, World War II hero. And the left wing says...

COLBY: I don't know about hero.

BRADEN: Yeah, I'd say that. I'd say that.

All right. The left wing charges that you were placed in charge of certain covert activities during the Vietnam War and that you deliberately engaged in a campaign of assassination.

BUCHANAN: The Phoenix program.

COLBY: Absolutely false. If you'll look...

BUCHANAN: Can you tell us about the Phoenix program?

COLBY: Well, I'd need about 15 or 20 minutes to give you a good explanation, and I don't think you have the time.

PETERSON: Take it.

COLBY: I'm the guy who wrote the directive for the Phoenix program when it started. And one of the things I put in it is, "This is not a program of assassination." Because it's important when you're facing terrorists that you develop a concept of law, a concept of confidence with the people that you're dealing with, that you are not arbitrary, that you are seriously working to gather good intelligence -- not bad intelligence, but good intelligence -- about the secret enemy that you're dealing with.

BUCHANAN: But we were at war -- okay. We were at war...

COLBY: And that you're not a McCarthyite, that you're not denouncing people for being Communists, but you're asking what their specific job was.

BUCHANAN: Right. You were in the business, though, in Vietnam not just of denouncing people, of finding out...

COLBY: Of arresting them and trying to get them to rally to the government's side.

BUCHANAN: And it's alleged that under the Phoenix program thousands of VC, Vietnamese...

COLBY: Now, we've gone over that year after year.

BUCHANAN: You're saying that all those allegations are false?

COLBY: They are false. Because what the allegations use are the numbers that I gave in testimony before the Congress of the United States in sworn testimony. One thing I said was that 17,000 people that we had identified as leaders of the Communist apparatus had rallied to the government's side, 28,000 had been captured and 20,000 had been killed in the course of military operations. That when a battle took place outside the village at night, we went around in the morning to see who was killed on both sides. And sure enough, that fellow that you had on your list as a member of the Communist apparatus was dead.

BUCHANAN: Did you see "Apocalypse Now," the film?

COLBY: I haven't seen it. I really don't agree with that kind of super...

BUCHANAN: Well, in other words, they say that these agents were sent out, basically, to kill people and to assassinate the enemy, and in one case to assassinate our own. That's just nonsense?

COLBY: When we had units in Vietnam fighting an enemy, yes, they went out to kill people, because that's what military units do. They go out to kill the enemy. That's part of a military operation. And that's how...

BUCHANAN: How do you feel about Vietnam now?

COLBY: I think that it's a great disappointment that we Americans left what was essentially a victory and dumped it over and turned it over to the enemy.

BUCHANAN: Why did we do that, and who's responsible for that?

COLBY: In part because we exaggerated our images of it, because we interpreted the Tet offensive as a defeat when it was really a victory against the Communists, when we ignored the fact that we had brought peace to large portions of Vietnam.

BUCHANAN: Well, you're talking about the press.

COLBY: I traveled in the countryside at midnight safely...

[Confusion of voices]

BRADEN: Let him finish.

COLBY: ...talking about the press. I'm talking about the fact that the American people were so disappointed by the fact that we had sent 500,000 soldiers off to Vietnam and that they hadn't been able to bring about a result. And so we were disgusted with it. And we missed the whole point, that the 500 soldiers had -- 500,000 soldiers had nothing to do with the nature of the war. It was a village war, not military.

PETERSON: But there was a lot more to the opposition of the American people than the fact that they weren't winning with those 500,000 men.

COLBY: But I think -- I think the basic thing is that if they were winning, the American people would have been...

PETERSON: ...moral argument?

COLBY: I know it. And I've heard the moral arguments of a lot of places. But if the Americans went...

PETERSON: You just dismiss them?

COLBY: If we had won the Bay of Pigs, the American people would have been delighted.

BUCHANAN: All right. But you said we won the battle of Tet.

COLBY: We won the battle of Tet and we won the battle of...

BUCHANAN: Who is responsible for the perception that we lost it?

COLBY: Because of the way in which we conduct our

affairs, the way in which we exaggerate the dramatic image of...

BUCHANAN: Who?

PETERSON: He's trying to get you to say that we in the news media...

BUCHANAN: ...tell the bad story in Vietnam? Did the Administration not do it properly? Was Johnson -- had he lost his credibility?

COLBY: There were a whole variety of reasons. I mean one thing we did wrong was to overthrow a friendly government of President Ngo Dinh Diem...

BUCHANAN: We overthrew?

COLBY: Yes. Our President...

BUCHANAN: You mean the United States overthrew him?

PETERSON: John F. Kennedy.

COLBY: Yes. John F. Kennedy gave the signal to the generals that if they overthrew him, we would continue to support...

BUCHANAN: Wait a minute. I think that -- to be fair to President Kennedy, my reading of it was that there was an indication that the United States would not interfere.

COLBY: No, no. It was more than that. I beg your pardon. We had cut off the aid to President Diem and we gave the clear signal to the general that the aid would be resumed if there was a new government.

BUCHANAN: Well, we bear a certain responsibility for his death.

COLBY: We certainly does -- do. Perhaps not for his death, but nonetheless for his overthrow.

BUCHANAN: Which resulted in the death of him and his brother.

COLBY: The death of President Diem and his brother, friends of mine, came about because one general decided that if you draw a sword against the tyrant, you'd better use it.

PETERSON: Have we not forgotten all the allegations of corruption in the Diem regime?

COLBY: There was corruption in the Diem regime. There

was corruption in Boston. There was corruption in Chicago. There was corruption all over the world.

PETERSON: But we didn't send 500,000 people to Dick Daley's Chicago.

COLBY: We sent quite a few down in the South.

BUCHANAN: There were only 16,000 in Vietnam when Diem was assassinated.

BRADEN: Well, let's not fight the war. I'd like to know what Bill Colby thinks we ought to do about what happened in Rome today.

COLBY: There are three things to do about terrorism.

PETERSON: All right. Can I interrupt you right now and come back to that?

* * *

PETERSON: You said you had three things that can be done about the kind of thing that happened in Rome.

COLBY: Three things about terrorism. Terrorism is a problem that we live with in America. We've lived with it for hundreds of years. We've got the Ku Klux Klan. We've got the Weathermen. We've got all sorts.

What do you need to handle terrorism? One, good intelligence. You need to be able to penetrate into these terrorist groups and learn their identities and their plans.

Secondly, you need some good security procedures, ordinary defense procedures. The best example, of course, is the screening thing that we all go through at the airport, a minimal problem, minimal intrusion on your rights, but nonetheless a very effective tool.

And thirdly, you need public support. You have to have the concept that the public is supporting you in this effort. Now, that requires that you operate through legal and constitutional means, and not through unconstitutional means. Because if you go over the edge and start to be arbitrary, you will lose public support.

PETERSON: You mentioned the Weathermen. If you had been in the Department of Justice, would you have brought charges against Mark Felt?

COLBY: No, I don't think I would have. I think that

the situation at the time was serious. We had people being blown up in the country. We had 5000 bombings in one year in this country. You had a tradition that the FBI was supposed to go out and learn about these things, and supposed to go over the edge from time to time.

Now, if you want to change the rules, it's all right. But then apply the rules to the future. Don't apply them to the past.

BUCHANAN: Retroactively.

Let me ask you this. In what they've done with the FBI now, I think an organization has to actively engage in violent activities before the FBI can wiretap, etcetera.

COLBY: Probable cause of a crime.

BUCHANAN: Okay. Had the FBI been engaged in the Hanafi Muslim or the KKK or the Communist Workers Party, they might have prevented those killings. Is your feeling that the law has gone too far restricting the CIA and the FBI?

COLBY: I think that the rule that applies to the FBI today about subversion and espionage, that you must have probable cause to believe that there is a crime in the course of commission before you can investigate, is too much. I think that there are now protections which did not exist a few years ago against arbitrary use of the FBI or the CIA.

BUCHANAN: Do you think that...

COLBY: Because now you have congressional committees that review what they do. Ten years ago, 20 years ago, the Congress didn't want to know what they were doing. They just let them go. And, of course, they had to make up the rules as they went along, and sometimes they made a mistake in the rules.

BUCHANAN: Do you think the attempted assassination of the Pope by an individual who is clearly an international terrorist will swing the pendulum back toward the center in this country at all?

COLBY: Well, I hope that we are all going to become more aware of the danger that these terrorists pose to our society and to our safety.

PETERSON: There are those who believe the pendulum is already past the center and swinging right.

BUCHANAN: There are those who hope this.

COLBY: There are those who believe that McCarthyism is automatically coming back because we're conscious of the fact that there's a threat. I don't agree with that.

BUCHANAN: Let me ask you...

COLBY: I think we can reach a middle sensible ground among us Americans.

BUCHANAN: All right. Was it a middle sensible ground when your friend, I guess, Dick Helms went before a committee, it was a public committee, and they asked him: Was the CIA involved in Chile? And he had one oath told him that he could not reveal the secrets and the other told him he had to say -- tell the truth, and he gave a flat no, we weren't involved. And then our government indicted Mr. Helms, prosecuted him and convicted him?

COLBY: When he did that, he was under the impression that the congressmen and senators that were asking the questions were well aware of the true answer and well aware of the nature of the questions they were asking him.

BUCHANAN: Why, then, did his own government prosecute him?

COLBY: I think it was a great mistake, that they should not have prosecuted him.

BUCHANAN: An injustice?

COLBY: Yes, an absolutely injustice, as in the course of Mr. Felt and Mr. Miller.

BUCHANAN: And you were delighted to see Felt and Miller pardoned.

COLBY: I was delighted to see them. I contributed to their defense, and I'm delighted at the fact that they were pardoned.

BRADEN: Bill, you wrote a piece called "Intelligence in the 1980s," which I read with care, and I find it interesting. And I'd just like you to go through one part of it. You said that -- you listed some of the intelligence failures of the last few years. You mentioned, I think, a failure of intelligence in Iran, a failure of intelligence in Vietnam about where the supplies were coming from, and one other -- oh, the Cuban...

COLBY: The Cuban brigade -- the Soviet brigade in Cuba.

BRADEN: The Soviet brigade in Cuba.

Now, have there been any other intelligence failures?

COLBY: There's been lots of intelligence failures. The purpose of intelligence is not to give you a crystal ball with an absolute view of the future. Because if you had it, you wouldn't want it, because it would mean that you'd have to be condemned to go through that experience. The function of intelligence is to warn you about something that may happen, and may likely happen, so that you can act, so that a better, rather than a worse, result ensues, and thereby proves the prediction wrong, but wrong for the right reason.

BRADEN: But the interesting thing to me about your whole discussion of intelligence in the '80s was that you placed very little emphasis on what you and I used to work with -- namely, spies.

COLBY: That's right.

BRADEN: Why?

COLBY: Well, they're a part of the problem. I'm not dismissing them. They are a necessary element. But today we have technology. Today we have enormous scholarship. And this is the real key to intelligence. We live in an information age today in which most major decisions, even in secret countries, are public.

Now, we discussed, as I said, the details of Soviet secret weaponry. How? Because we learned about them and we shared them with our people so that we could discuss them. Now, this wouldn't have been conceivable a mere 20 years ago.

BUCHANAN: ...a historical question. I remember the phrase. They said -- it was a Sunday morning under the presidency of Gerald Ford, and they said Jim Schlesinger headed into the Oval Office and he met Mr. Colby coming out with his head under his arm, that it had been cut off.

COLBY: Not quite, but...

BUCHANAN: But why did -- why were you discharged by President Ford?

COLBY: Oh, because he had to show that he was in charge of intelligence. We'd had a very exciting year of denunciation and chaos and so forth, and he had to assert his authority.

BUCHANAN: Do you think you were made to swallow the football, as it were?

COLBY: That's fair enough. You serve at the pleasure

of the President.

BRADEN: Do you remember what John Kennedy...

COLBY: There's nothing wrong with that.

BRADEN: Remember what John Kennedy said to Richard...

[Confusion of voices]

BRADEN: Remember that, you guys, what John Kennedy said to Richard Bissell? He said, "Under the British system of government, I would have to go. But this is the United States."

PETERSON: "You go."

What is your view -- in light of all the technology and the scholarship, what is your view of the American Intelligence establishment at this moment?

COLBY: I think it's the best in the world. I think it needs to heal the wounds that it's suffered over the past five years by the excitement and the exaggeration that has been imposed upon it. I think we're in the process of doing that, of putting it back into some stable system and letting it get back to work, which is what it really ought to be doing. It ought to be focusing on the real problems that we face, the problems from the Soviets, the problems from the Third World, the problems from the terrorists.

BUCHANAN: About four years ago, just when Admiral Stansfield Turner came in, he delivered a terse, I think 75-word, message to several hundred agents, the beginning of some 800 who were to be RIFed or terminated. What did that do to the morale of the agency?

COLBY: Well, it was a great mistake. And Turner himself has admitted that it was wrong. You don't send pink slips to people who have spent their career in something. And he realizes that, that he should have...

BUCHANAN: Did he gut the counterintelligence area?

COLBY: I don't think so. I'm the one who's accused of gutting the counterintelligence area.

BRADEN: Colby made the great...

COLBY: Because I changed the basic leadership of counterintelligence.

BUCHANAN: You fired James Jesus Angleton.

COLBY: Yeah, Mr. Angleton. Because we had some differences at how we went...

BUCHANAN: What is your assessment of Mr. Angleton's career?

COLBY: I think he did great service for his country for many years. I think that at the end of his career it became a little unapplicable to the current problems. I listened to the descriptions of his work. I looked for the results. I didn't find the results. I was looking for the agents that had been identified...

BUCHANAN: But he did keep the agency free of a mole. And no other Western Intelligence agency has been free.

COLBY: Well, I'm not sure that he did that all by himself.

BUCHANAN: But it was under -- here's the thing. If there had been a mole there, it would have been his responsibility.

COLBY: No, not really. The responsibility would have been the Director's and it would have been the Security Office, which was responsible for screening the people coming into the agency. His job was to identify the foreign intelligence activities in their home ground. That's a different subject than protecting your own staff and your own personnel.

PETERSON: What about this mole business? Is this a novelist's pipedream?

COLBY: It's great drama. It's great fiction. And the fact is...

PETERSON: Well, it's more than fiction in England.

COLBY: Well, the fact is, you have to...

BUCHANAN: In Germany, In France...

COLBY: You have to assume that you've got them. I mean all the other countries have had them. We always operated as though there might be one there.

If you worked on China, you were not privy to the secrets about the Soviet Union. Because if you were wrong, it at least limited the area to which you could be a traitor. And therefore you assume it. You operate on that basis.

I frankly don't believe we had one, although it wouldn't change my way of operating, because I think it would have come up

if we had had it.

BRADEN: What about that kid we had, though? Didn't he work under you? I mean you probably didn't even know him. But the guy that actually took some papers and...

BUCHANAN: The 23-year-old guy that took the Big Bird...

COLBY: Kampiles?

BUCHANAN: Kampiles, yeah.

COLBY: Well, he was -- that happened after I was there, but I'm not disowning responsibility. I mean the fact is he got a little crazy. He thought he was going to be a great counterintelligence operator and make his way to the Soviets and give them something to tease them and interest them. And they were smart enough to be able to exploit it.

BUCHANAN: We had some real trouble at TRW, too. Let me ask you...

COLBY: And we had two young, drunk punks -- punks who went into the drug business and made six or eight thousand dollars.

BUCHANAN: Well, that raises the question...

COLBY: The difference, really, is that if you go back to the time of the great Soviet recruitments in the late '30s and '40s, you find an ideological base. Those people thought they were for the revolution, for anti-fascism, all the rest of it. In fact, they were then used by the Soviets to open up our atomic secrets. Alger Hiss was convicted of perjury for denying that he was a Soviet agent. Those are pretty good recruitments. Kim Philby became an agent.

But lately all we've had are these young punks that sell out for a few thousand dollars. Now, that's a different order of magnitude.

BUCHANAN: The Soviet Union's the god that failed now. It wasn't in the 1930s.

COLBY: The Soviets are ideologically dead. Let's face it. There's nothing there. And nobody's interested in the Soviet model of society anymore. The American society, the freedom, the free society that we represent, has been successful all over the world. The programmed, socialist, totalitarian societies are on their ears. They can't pay for themselves...

BUCHANAN: Ideologically, but not militarily.

COLBY: Their refugees run away.

Sure, they have the guns. But they don't have any spiritual.

BRADEN: They don't have the ideas.

BUCHANAN: No, but they seem to be succeeding in Central America, not with ideas.

COLBY: I think we can whup 'em.

PETERSON: If I don't sell something right now, there isn't going to be anything left here.

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PETERSON: Please welcome now to After Hours in the Channel 9 newsroom Mr. Richard J. Barnet, who is a senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, usually referred to in the news magazines as the liberal Institute for Policy Studies.

BRADEN: Left-wing think tank.

RICHARD BARNET: Both.

PETERSON: Yeah. That's good too.

BARNET: Usually it says liberal.

PETERSON: Mr. Barnet is a prolific writer. He is currently in the -- well, not the current New Yorker, the one before the current New Yorker, on the question of national security.

I gather -- I would guess that you and Mr. Colby are not ideological soul brothers.

BARNET: Well, you know, it's a funny thing. On a number of questions, we really are. We were meeting together not long ago, talking about the Soviet Union and about SALT. We certainly agree on that. I think we agree that the answer to America's security problems is not just pouring a lot more money into a lot more nuclear weapons.

BUCHANAN: Do you agree that Philip Agee's a traitor?

BARNET: I don't think I would use that word. I disagree with a number of things that he's done. But that's not a term I would use loosely because the Constitution has some very specific definitions on that.

BRADEN: I was just -- I read that piece that you referred to. And you know, you make a very strong case that the

more nations pour into defense, the weaker their economies become. And you cite every nation in the world, and I think you prove your point. But what got me about it is that you also apparently agreed that we had to protect a free society against a totalitarian threat.

Now, my question is this: How do you protect our society against a Russian threat if at the same time, by protecting it, you weaken it?

BARNET: Well, it depends on finding the right strategy to protect it. And the right strategy to protect it is, first, to have a very clear idea of what you're protecting. And the first thing we're protecting is our free institutions. We're protecting our economy. We're protecting -- the whole purpose of a national security strategy is to enable the people of this country to work out their destiny without being coerced or attacked from outside.

Now, that means, first, that you've got to build the real sources of your own strength which is in your society. It doesn't mean you don't have to have a military. But it does mean that you've got to do something we have not done in this country since 1945, and that is really figure out what are the roles and missions of the military.

Today we say, "Well, we've got problems in the world because we're losing power. We have lots of threats in the world." And the easy answer, and the one that this President successfully campaigned on last year, was, "Well, it means we have...."

BRADEN: Increase the defense budget.

BARNET: Increase the defense budget willy-nilly. The fact is, a lot of what we're spending on the military isn't going to protect us all. It isn't going to deal with a future Iranian problem. It wouldn't have dealt with the last Iranian problem. It will not deal with the problem of threat to resources, to cutting off access to oil.

I think, in a world in which we've really got limited resources, and we certainly don't have all the money in the world, we've got to be very sure what it is that we're buying.

BRADEN: Well, then you think Reagan is being silly by saying, "Look, we need X percent increase in the defense budget"? You think that...

BARNET: That's absurd. I mean if you did that in any other -- and you can't just blame Reagan on that. I think you have to blame Carter. He started that, only the percentage has gone up. He said three percent, and now Reagan says seven percent.

If you did that in any other field, if you said, "Well, we've got a health problem in this country. Therefore we're going to spend five percent more on health, and we'll figure out later what it's going to be," people would think you needed to have your head examined.

PETERSON: Can we start at the beginning? In the beginning of your article you talk about the gap between Soviet spending and American spending on defense. And some of the figures you come up with are very interesting. You allege that the figures we have been reading over the years, through various Administrations, are fictional, or at least contrived.

BARNET: Well, they're totally contrived, because we don't know the real figure that the Soviets spend. Nobody does. The intelligence agencies do not. Therefore, what we have done is develop a certain formula, a certain convention for figuring out what they spend. And what we do, we say, "Well, supposing they bought their tanks from Chrysler or General Motors, and supposing they paid American wages to their conscripts. Now we can figure what the budget costs them."

But in fact, that's enormously inflated. So that every time our pay gets raised in this country or every time General Motors jacks up the price of a tank, then the Soviet threat goes up.

BUCHANAN: Well, let me give you some basic numbers. The Soviets have more than twice as many under arms. They have about 10,000 females in their armed forces, where we've got about 100,000. They've got 50,000, where we have about 10,000 tanks. They've...

PETERSON: Where are these people?

BUCHANAN: I mean these are all official DOD numbers. They're not dollars we're talking about, they're weapons.

BARNET: The DOD numbers are very well specified in the article, based on the -- based on the Secretary of Defense's posture statements, the last statement of Harold Brown...

BUCHANAN: How many surface-to-air missiles do they have and how many do we have? Because the numbers that I've seen are 12,000 for the Soviets and zero for the U.S.

BARNET: But you see, that's a meaningless figure, because you're not talking...

BUCHANAN: It's not meaningless if you're a pilot.

BARNET: No. If you're talking -- in the first place,

it depends on the categories. If you're talking about submarine-based missiles, if you're talking about...

BUCHANAN: I'm talking about SAMs.

BARNET: The fact is that you cannot simply take one part of a military establishment and compare it with the other. Their military establishment...

BUCHANAN: How many heavy missiles do they have and how many do we have?

BARNET: Let me just finish.

They have a whole series of different tasks for their military than we do, and ours is organized differently. Ours is largely a sea-based system for the heavy-base missiles. Theirs is largely a land-based system.

BUCHANAN: Well, theirs is a first-strike system and ours is a second-strike system.

BARNET: No. Ours is increasingly moving towards first-strike, and so is theirs.

BUCHANAN: Which first-strike...

BARNET: And so is theirs. That -- you put your finger right on it, Mr. Buchanan. That's the problem. The problem is both of these powers are moving towards technology, with increasingly accurate warheads, increasingly swift reaction. The United States has been ahead in this whole technological development, about five years ahead, every step of the way, from the time we invented the bomb to the time we invented the missile to the time we invented the MIRV. And we're still ahead. That's certainly what the head of engineering in the Pentagon said in...

BUCHANAN: Well, Harold Brown has, himself, conceded, after long delay, that the Soviet Union has the capacity to take out America's land-based force with a first strike.

BARNET: No. I'm sorry.

BUCHANAN: Is reaching that. Is reaching that.

BARNET: I'm sorry. What he said was...

BUCHANAN: And the United States can't have that until you get an MX.

BARNET: I'm sorry. What he said -- what he said, Mr. Buchanan, was that the Soviets will, if present trends go on, have

the possibility of taking out a substantial amount, possibly as much as...

BUCHANAN: Ninety percent.

BARNET: ...of 90 percent of...

BUCHANAN: Our land-based...

BARNET: ...the land-based missiles.

BUCHANAN: Right.

BARNET: The point being, of course, that land-based missiles are, by definition, very vulnerable.

The Soviet Union is, of course, more vulnerable because more of their system, 70 percent of their system, is land-based. Our system is very largely based on the sea-based systems, the Polaris, the Poseidon.

BUCHANAN: Which is a second-strike weapon.

BARNET: Which is a second-strike weapon, and therefore a very good weapon.

BUCHANAN: If you want to attack somebody's cities, it's a good weapon. But I don't think you want to do something like that.

BARNET: It's a very good weapon if your interest is deterrence of an attack and you not wish to be provocative. Because the one situation in which the Soviet Union, I fear, might launch an attack -- and it's the only one that I can conceive of -- is when they believe that an attack by the United States was imminent.

BUCHANAN: Is it true -- a historical question -- that in 1969, as a conservative think tank alleges, that you went to Hanoi and during a rally accused the United States [unintelligible] war of aggression?

BARNET: That's false.

BUCHANAN: Did you go to Hanoi?

BARNET: I did go to Hanoi and I wrote articles for the New York Times.

BUCHANAN: 1969?

BARNET: I went for the New York Times. And I then

reported to Henry Kissinger on what I had talked about. And Henry Kissinger at that time suggested that I go back.

BUCHANAN: What is your feeling about the outcome of the war in Vietnam?

BARNET: The war in Vietnam was a tragedy.

BUCHANAN: What is your feeling about -- is the situation for the Vietnamese people better now than it was when the Americans were there?

BARNET: It's certainly better than it was when there was a war and when bombs were raining down every day, obviously.

BUCHANAN: Well, there's not a million dead in the South China Sea.

BARNET: There's not -- there's not -- there's not as large numbers of people being killed.

BUCHANAN: There's not three million dead in Cambodia, then.

BARNET: I'm not talking about Cambodia. You asked me about Vietnam.

BUCHANAN: Well, let's put them all together as one Indochina.

BARNET: Well, you can't quite put them all together. Let's first talk about Vietnam. And then I'll be glad to answer your questions on Cambodia.

But on Vietnam, of course, the fact that the war is over is a tremendous -- is certainly a great improvement for people who were living day and night under the terror...

BUCHANAN: Is it improvement for the people of South Vietnam?

BARNET: But, you see, the question that I think we, as Americans, have to ask is one that really relates to ourselves.

BUCHANAN: Well, let me ask you about them. We're going to talk about them and then we're going to talk about the Cambodians and then we'll talk about the Americans.

BARNET: Let's talk about ourselves first, because the implication of your question -- and you've said this in other places -- is that those of us who very strongly opposed the American involvement in the war in Vietnam were doing so for some

reason that either we favored the Vietnamese or that we wished to see...

BUCHANAN: Which Vietnamese?

BARNET: Or that we wished to see a...

BRADEN: The North Vietnamese.

BARNET: The North Vietnamese, the people who won the war.

That is really a slander of a lot of patriotic Americans who saw the war for what it was, which is a terrible tragedy for the United States in which we reached out to prove our power, and in the process showed, really, that power had changed, and we severely weakened ourselves, both internationally and internally.

BUCHANAN: And you blame Kennedy and Johnson for that.

BARNET: I blame a lot of people. I blame, in some sense, all of us. Because those of us who did not do everything they could to point out what the problem was...

BRADEN: He's only telling you what I've been trying to tell you, Pat. It was a war that this country didn't, couldn't possibly win, because the people didn't care.

BUCHANAN: If we can't beat North Vietnam, then...

BRADEN: The people didn't care.

BUCHANAN: They did care up until 1968.

BRADEN: It didn't make that much difference to us.

BUCHANAN: Why didn't you raise that question with Mr. Colby?

BRADEN: Right now, Pat, what difference does it make to us, this country, to its interests and our way of living, who controls Hanoi?

BUCHANAN: Well, I'll tell you, it is of interest to us who controls Cam Ranh Bay. It is of interest to us that the Soviet fleet is -- and Soviet planes are flying out of those bases. It is of interest to us that people that put their confidence in us are dying by the tens of thousands and have died by the millions. It is of interest to us that, for example, that Nazi Germany not succeed in the conquest of Eastern Europe.

BRADEN: I hope you're not comparing Nazi Germany with North Vietnam.

BUCHANAN: Vietnam is the worst aggressor, in my judgment. And what it's done to the people of Southeast Asia is comparable to what Hitler did to the Jews.

Would you disagree with that?

BARNET: I would totally disagree with that?

BUCHANAN: What about Cambodia, then? Let's go to Cambodia.

BARNET: I would totally disagree. Cambodia -- Cambodia, when I was there in 1969, was a neutral country at peace, with a prince struggling to deal with the North Vietnamese, who had come in and used his territory, and was making progress.

The United States openly assisted a coup which...

BUCHANAN: We only had 12 guys in there when the coup occurred. Twelve guys...

BARNET: Did him in and brought a hideous repressive government there, under Lon Nol.

BUCHANAN: What do you mean? They took...

BARNET: Which then produced the kind of polarization...

BUCHANAN: You mean a hideous -- Lon Nol was hideous?

BARNET: Yes, he sure was -- and that you see all around, where, in fact, you had a polarization in which the Khmer Rouge took over.

BUCHANAN: In 1975, three years after the Americans...

PETERSON: This splendid state of affairs led to what has been called awful genocide.

BARNET: Yes. I mean it was a hideous regime and it was one in which...

BUCHANAN: Lon Nol's regime was a hideous regime?

[Confusion of voices]

BARNET: I was referring to Pol Pot.

BUCHANAN: Now it's Pol Pot.

BARNET: I was talking about Pol Pot, which was much worse.

BUCHANAN: How about the regime in Hanoi? Would you call that hideous, too?

BARNET: No, I would not. I think -- I think -- I think -- I think...

BUCHANAN: How would you describe it?

BARNET: I would describe it as a regime that was trying, under the most incredibly difficult circumstances, to bring about a reconstruction of the country. I don't think they've done a very good job of it. I don't approve of many of the things that they've done.

But I think that this is a complicated world in which you have to make distinctions. I think that the distinction between Hanoi, that there's a distinction between them and Pol Pot, and there's a distinction between Hanoi and...

BUCHANAN: But I guess when you're in the South China Sea, it doesn't make a great deal of difference whether you're running away from Pol Pot or you're running away from the victors in Hanoi.

BARNET: Or from the South, you know. I mean...

BUCHANAN: But they didn't go into the South China Sea during the war.

BARNET: There are victims of political oppression all over the world.

BUCHANAN: Can I ask you one question about the South?

BRADEN: Let him answer the first one.

BARNET: All over the world, Mr. Buchanan. And I think...

BUCHANAN: Where are they all running from?

BARNET: I think that what -- they're running from a lot of different places. They're running from El Salvador by the thousands right into this city. And I can tell you some stories about some of them if you'd like to listen.

BUCHANAN: They're running out of Ethiopia. They're running out of Cambodia. They're running out of Vietnam.

BARNET: Yes. And they're running out of Argentina and

a hundred thousand have run out of Chile. I mean the fact is that...

BUCHANAN: The difference between Argentina and Chile -- I'm not defending that -- is that you can get on a plane and fly out.

BARNET: We can't have a conversation if I can't finish.

BUCHANAN: Sure.

BARNET: There's no monopoly in the world, as it is today, on brutalizing and terror by governments, whether they are of the left or whether they're of the right. And it is, in my view, very self-defeating for us here in the United States to be arguing with one another about whether one government is better or worse than another.

BUCHANAN: Let's talk about American security.

BARNET: Let's talk about American security.

[Confusion of voices]

PETERSON: We will discuss American security in just a moment. And maybe we can back to whether your nasty is nastier than my nasty.

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PETERSON: With Richard Barnet, After Hours in the Channel 9 newsroom.

"The rubles that the Russians spend on weaponry hurt them more than they hurt the United States." That sound familiar?"

BARNET: Yes.

PETERSON: You wrote it.

BARNET: I did.

PETERSON: Can you document that?

BARNET: Well, the point is that the Russians are under very great pressure from their military. They have an economy that is half as large as ours, which is the reason why I think there is a genuine interest that they have in arms control and arms reduction. And that's the basis of common interest, one of the important elements of common interest on which I think agreements can be made.

You asked what kind of a military we ought to have. I think if you start with the nuclear, I don't think we need anything more. I think we have -- we have 9500 warheads or more. The Soviets have about 7000, hundreds more than enough to destroy almost two-thirds of the industrial capacity of either country. We ought to stop.

And not only does the addition to the nuclear force really cost money -- it's not as expensive as conventional forces -- but the most important thing is this momentum creates the very dangerous military environment in which military planners on both sides get increasingly nervous. And that's when the danger of preemptive strikes, of miscalculations gets very serious.

That's the only kind of war, I think, that we can have. The notion that the Russians are going to sit by the computer and calculate that they can have a first strike and only lose 10 million, 20 million, 30 million, I think, is a very dangerous fantasy.

BUCHANAN: But here's the thing. Is it not true that from 1945 to, say, 1962 the United States enjoyed absolute superiority over the Soviet Union?

BARNET: More than that. The Russians weren't even in the race.

BUCHANAN: They weren't even in the race. But there was a period of peace and stability, as compared with our period of relative parity, where the Soviets are on the move all over the world.

BARNET: All kinds of things have changed now, Mr. Buchanan. The fact is, you've got 170 countries today. You have the United States no longer exercising the kind of unique power it did at the end of the war. We were the world's banker. We had a monopoly on nuclear weapons.

And that's the point. That's why the world now looks so different and looks so much more dangerous than it did then. The Soviet Union today is stronger militarily. But I agree with what Mr. Colby said. It is weaker ideologically. It has enormous problems. It is the only country in the world surrounded entirely by hostile Communist powers.

PETERSON: But what about the Harriman view of what tough talk does to so-called moderates, if there are any, in the Kremlin?

BARNET: There's no question. You see, the real issue is, is it better to have a -- try to have a nego -- there are three positions: Don't negotiate ever, negotiate now, or nego-

tiate later. I think the first position is an absolute recipe for disaster. If we continue an arms race and we simply exclude negotiation, we're going to have what you already have in Europe. You have 66 percent of the people in Germany, according to the government polls, U.S. government polls, now totally against the rearmament and modernization, against the idea of strong ties, strong defense ties with the United States. Neutralism is increasing.

We're having -- with the prospect of only confrontation, no negotiation, you're going to have splits in the industrial world that are very serious.

The second possibility is, do we negotiate now or do we wait until, supposedly, we get a better balance with the Soviet Union?

BRADEN: That's the Reagan position.

BARNET: That's the Reagan position. I think that...

BUCHANAN: They have 250 SS-20s, and they're going up at the rate of two a week, in Eastern Europe.

BARNET: Yes. And President -- and Brezhnev has offered to have a moratorium today.

BUCHANAN: Sure. He's got 250 sitting there with three warheads on each of them.

BARNET: Yeah. But we can't put any in for three years. And so he's going to put in two every week, while we wait...

[Confusion of voices]

BUCHANAN: That modernization is a reaction to what he's done.

BARNET: Yes, but it doesn't make sense. I mean what makes sense...

BUCHANAN: You talked about American security. Let's go down the countries. Where does the threat come from?

BARNET: What makes sense is to...

BUCHANAN: Negotiate with the Russians, have a freeze now.

BARNET: Is to stop the forward momentum of the race.

Now, if you want to talk about conventional forces...

BUCHANAN: I want to talk about this country. Now, you mentioned right wing and left wing, they're equally bad, etcetera. All right. Now, here's three left-wing countries, the Soviet Union, Hanoi, Cuba. And here's five right-wing countries, Argentina, Chile, Brazil, South Africa, South Korea. Agreed. Which of these two groups presents the greatest threat to the interests of the United States in the future?

BARNET: I don't think you can...

BRADEN: You're changing the subject.

BUCHANAN: Well, that's the one that you wanted to talk about.

BARNET: No, that's not the one I want to talk about.

BUCHANAN: We can go back to the SS-20s if you want.

BARNET: Let me say that the notion that the Administration is following, that somehow Cuba is responsible for the revolutionary violence in places like El Salvador, where two percent of the people own most of the land and people are desperate, is another recipe for disaster. The fact is that we can threaten Cuba, which high officials of this Administration have done. And then we've got to face the real problem: Is it a threat in which we don't back it up, in which once again we look weak? Or do we back it up and then run the very real risk that the Soviet Union, who are involved in Cuba -- they're not involved in El Salvador. They are involved in Cuba -- then begins to retaliate in places where we are vulnerable, such as Berlin.

BUCHANAN: In El Salvador, are they manufacturing...

BARNET: I can assure you the people of Berlin are concerned about that.

[Confusion of voices]

BARNET: ...go back to the old days of John Foster Dulles and say, you know, "If we just talk tough and if we just follow the policies that worked then, we'll be able to do it now." But that's not recognizing that the world has completely changed.

BUCHANAN: I don't think you're recognizing reality. Everybody agrees that there's revolutionary conditions in the countries of Central America. But peasants in El Salvador can't produce mortars and rocket launchers and grenade launchers and rifles and machine guns.

BARNET: They can take them from the army, which is exactly what revolutionary groups have done all through history.

BUCHANAN: And you're suggesting that the Cubans are not running stuff in there through Nicaragua?

BARNET: I'm not suggesting that they haven't sent some stuff up there. But I am certainly suggesting that that is not the critical component. And that if you took all of the Cuban weapons away and you had a complete airtight isolation of El Salvador...

BRADEN: There would still be revolution.

BARNET: There would still be revolution.

BUCHANAN: ...have no weapons to fight it.

BARNET: That's not true. There are weapons in there that we are sending. They're using our weapons. And that's what they did in Vietnam. That's what they did in Cambodia.

BRADEN: The Catholic Church is begging us not to send any more.

BUCHANAN: Tom, when did you ever quote the Catholic Church on anything?

BRADEN: Well, I just...

PETERSON: Tonight.

BUCHANAN: Uh-huh. Tonight was your first time.

BRADEN: No, I don't think so. I respect those arch-bishops, Pat, just as much as you do.

BUCHANAN: The Catholic Church does not speak infallibly on matters about El Salvador.

BARNET: And they've been fighting for their people and their parishioners for a long time, and I think they deserve a little respect when they come up, bishop after bishop, priest after priest, and say, "Please don't send those weapons."

BUCHANAN: And we've had priests come up and say, "Look..."

BARNET: Are they Communists? Are they Communists?

BUCHANAN: Well, the individuals have come out of Nicaragua and said, "We made a terrible mistake," priests and others, and said, "Look, you've got a Communist regime down there just like Cuba. Don't you know it?"

BARNET: It's not what the El Salvador bishop -- it's

not what the acting bishop has said.

BUCHANAN: What do they say in Nicaragua? What do they say in Nicaragua, which is now, I guess -- Is that your idea of a revolution that you'd like to see succeed, the one in El Salvador?

BARNET: I would like to see any revolution in which people have struggled to try to make a decent life for their people succeed. And by succeed, I mean both try to make it economically and respect the rights of people, even the rights of the people who didn't go with the revolution.

BUCHANAN: Would you like to see the guerrillas in Afghanistan and the guerrillas in Angola succeed?

BARNET: I would like to see the Russians out of Afghanistan. I sure would.

BUCHANAN: How about Angola? UNITA obviously represents that tribe down there, with Savimbi.

BARNET: That's not obvious. They...

BUCHANAN: Well, how could he survive? I mean, as you say yourself...

BARNET: Because he's getting outside help and...

BUCHANAN: Well, you said yourself, you know, he can get rifles from the army.

BARNET: He's gotten -- he's gotten help over the years from the Chinese, from the South Africans, from ourselves, through others.

It's -- all of those countries that are divided by tribal loyalties, it's very, very hard to make a nation, whether it's a revolutionary nation or not. But I do not think the United States should be supporting one faction or the other. I don't think it's in our interest, frankly, which one wins. The Gulf Oil Company has done very nicely for many years being guarded by Cuban troops at its refinery in Cabinda.

BUCHANAN: When was the last time that you were concerned about the interests of the Gulf Oil Company?

BARNET: I've always been concerned about the interests of the Gulf Oil Company because I...

BUCHANAN: You would like to nationalize them.

BARNET: Because I'm a driver of cars. And it concerns

me haow well the Gulf Oil Company looks after the national interest.

PETERSON: On that capitalistic note...

BUCHANAN: Even this fellow doesn't believe that one.

PETERSON: Thank you, Richard Barnet for being with us on After Hours tonight.

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SECURITY AND TERRORISM OPENING DAY AT THE SUB- COMMITTEE

ROBERT SHERRILL

Max Ascoli was in many ways a progressive, humane publisher. But when it came to foreign policy, he was unrelentingly, sometimes grotesquely, a cold warrier. He finally became convinced that liberals were hopelessly soft on Communism and beyond redemption. So, in the late 1960s, overcome by bitterness, he stopped publishing *The Reporter*. He refused to sell it for fear that it would fall into the hands of some publisher not sufficiently anti-Communist. He just killed it.

But that wasn't the end of it. *The Reporter's* anti-Communist ghost is still around and active in some influential places. Two of the magazine's notable alumni—Meg Greenfield, editor of *The Washington Post's* editorial page, and Claire Sterling, a foreign correspondent who frequently contributes to *The Post's* editorial page—helped launch the new Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism (S.S.T.).

On April 24, the day of the S.S.T.'s premier hearing, *The Post* editorialized that although legislative probes have "rarely . . . been effective in uncovering spies and traitors," the fact remains that "the threat posed today to American society both by foreign agents . . . and by internationally connected terrorist groups remains genuine and serious." What foreign agents in American society? What internationally connected terrorists in American society? The S.S.T. hearing produced no evidence that such creatures exist.

The only witness to claim that they do exist was Arnaud de Borchgrave, former *Newsweek* correspondent and now best known as a fiction

writer (*The Spike*). De Borchgrave told the subcommittee (only two of whose members bothered to show up) that the Russian K.G.B. is aggressively recruiting "agents and sources inside the Reagan Administration, and to steal industrial and high-technology secrets." With remarkable precision de Borchgrave reported that "on an average day, three American citizens are approached somewhere in the world for recruitment purposes by the K.G.B. and its allied services. That is over 1,000 a year—and an estimated 10 percent payoff for the K.G.B. one way or another."

Some of his wilder remarks drew snickers from the press table, but perhaps the reporters reacted that way because they were, as de Borchgrave has suggested, "anesthetized" by Soviet "disinformation specialists." De Borchgrave may not be a kook but he certainly did sometimes sound a bit far-out. It must have been embarrassing to *The Post* that he was the only witness who seemed as worried as it is about spies.

Every other witness at the hearing—including former Director of Central Intelligence William Colby (who said he had "some trouble" with de Borchgrave's position)—had to admit that the United States is remarkably free of *agents provocateurs* and of anything resembling political terrorism. The subcommittee's chairman, Jeremiah Denton of Alabama, asked Claire Sterling why terrorists weren't active in this country. For one thing, she said, the atmosphere isn't favorable—"when the Vietnam War began to phase out, the atmosphere in which terrorist activities could thrive began to die out." Second (one of the day's choice drolleries), "There's so much other violence here, it's hard for terrorists to get attention."

Nonetheless, Sterling does feel that we'd better look over our shoulders, because, while the terrorists aren't here yet, Soviet-subsidized terrorism abroad is "a direct threat to our own security." She ticked off the terrorist successes: Turkey "brought to her knees"; Spain "not allowed to draw a free breath in her young democracy"; Italy "at one point near collapse."

But what has that to do with terrorism in this country? she was asked. Sterling was hard put to make the connection. "All are our closest allies," she said, "and terrorists have said that the ultimate objective is us." That was as close to home as she could stretch her evidence.

CONTINUED

The results were picayune, but anyone old enough to remember Joe McCarthy and the House Un-American Activities Committee still could get a queasy feeling from the first hearings of the new Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism.

These straight-faced proceedings, like their dubious antecedents, were admittedly without any real legislative purpose; they were designed only "to raise public consciousness" about the threat of terrorism, said Chairman Jeremiah Denton of Alabama. If so, they're off to a poor start.

Here again, however, was the familiar stuff of yesteryear—the sweeping but unsubstantiated charge, the dark hints of conspiracy, the attempted linkage of dissidents to Soviet control, even the usual touch of unintended comedy. This came when Mr. Denton unbuttoned his shirt to show that he was not wearing a bullet-proof vest against the threat of terrorists.

Other than the chairman's torso, however, the hearings revealed nothing. Witnesses produced little of interest that they hadn't said or written before, and no headlines at all. They adduced nothing like a reason for a crackdown on political dissidents in the United States. The former C.I.A. Director, William Colby, even demolished the notion of a Soviet "mastermind" directing international violence—the "feeling that there is a central war room with flashing lights" somewhere in the Kremlin.

"There is no central war room," Mr. Colby said, even though he argued that the Soviet Union "did provide the instruments" for many terrorist organizations and incidents.

As for terrorism in the United States, Michael Ledeen of the Washington Quarterly said there was "at the moment, domestically, no problem." Appearing two days later on the NBC News program "Meet the Press," the F.B.I. Director, William H. Webster, said that "there is no real evidence of Soviet-sponsored terror-

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The Great Terrorist Hunt

By Tom Wicker

ism within the United States . . . We seem at this point to be free of direct, deliberate Soviet domination or control or instigation of terrorist activity."

What's more, Mr. Webster declared, guidelines restraining political surveillance and intrusive investigative techniques were not hampering the F.B.I. There would be, he said, "a storm of protest within the bureau" if the guidelines were removed. Thus, he deflated beforehand any effort to use domestic terrorism as an excuse for relaxing existing restraints on investigative agencies.

The Denton hearings nevertheless produced some causes for worry—not least the chairman's stated conviction that a Soviet "disinformation" program had had "a measure of success" in deceiving "a story-hungry and sometimes gullible press." Mr. Ledeen lent support to this novel thesis, and given both his and Mr. Webster's testimony that terrorism does not now threaten this country, "disinformation" is likely to become the focus of Mr. Denton's consciousness-raising.

That's bad news for the American press, which is not widely liked or trusted anyway and which recently suffered a blow to its credibility from the Janet Cooke hoax in The Washington Post. A new Gallup poll for News-

week reports that 61 percent of respondents believe "very little" or "only some" of what they are told by the press.

Mr. Denton's "disinformation" charges, no matter how refuted, are likely to make the credibility problem worse. An inquiry into alleged Soviet "disinformation" could also turn into a general rampage through the American press's editorial processes and decisions. How can Mr. Denton's gumshoes find out whether a story was planted in a newspaper by devious Soviet techniques without inquiring into how and why the newspaper gathered and printed the story?

Obviously, too, editors and reporters charged with handling such a story will appear to be something worse than "story-hungry and gullible" to many readers and viewers. Such pressures are likely to dim the enthusiasm of some press organs for tough and independent reporting that might, say, raise doubts about Administration policy in Salvador.

Despite Mr. Webster's testimony, moreover, the Reagan Administration and the subcommittee might yet manage to find some kind of a terrorist threat to American security, and a need to counter it with tough legislation. Secretary of State Haig has accused the Soviet Union of controlling international terrorism, and the Administration is reported to be working hard to document his charges and develop an antiterrorism policy. Chairman Denton said that the C.I.A. had recently broadened its definition of terrorism to include "threats."

The magic result, a State Department official told reporters, would be to double—from 3,336 to 7,000—the previously reported "incidents" of world terrorism from 1968 through 1979. The number killed or wounded, of course, would remain the same—about 8,000—since this bookkeeping slight-of-hand merely makes the same situation look twice as bad as it did before:

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Ralph W. McGehee

Colby's Vietnam: History Misrepresented

Former CIA director William Colby's article "El Salvador: Which 'Vietnam'?" [op-ed, April 20] describes the various stages of U.S. involvement in Vietnam and offers the period 1968 to 1972—the era of the CIA "Phoenix" assassination teams—as a model for use in El Salvador. In addition to this heinous recommendation, his article ignores the massive evidence of the Pentagon Papers and grossly distorts the facts.

According to Colby, a prime architect of U.S. policy in Vietnam, America's role in that country began in 1960. This "first" stage lasted until 1963. This era "marked the start of Hanoi's effort to overthrow the South." Colby's statement contains two major misrepresentations. U.S. involvement started in 1949, not 1960, when we sponsored French attempts to reimpose their colonial rule over Indochina. The second major misstatement relates to Hanoi's role in 1960. All objective Vietnamese experts attest to the great reluctance of the North Vietnamese to challenge U.S. power in South Vietnam. However, both the CIA's intelligence and a State Department white paper claimed the opposite was true. From that point forward until April 1975, the war, in U.S. intelligence reports, was portrayed as a North Vietnamese attack on South Vietnam.

Colby forgets to mention that the CIA created the Diem regime. After the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in early 1954 and the Geneva Conference of that year, the CIA plucked Ngo Dinh Diem out of obscurity in the United States and established him as the ruler of South Vietnam. He arrived in Saigon in mid-1954, controlling nothing except the complete dedication of the CIA's covert-action warriors. Even President Eisenhower questioned Diem's viability and admitted that Ho Chi Minh and his government commanded the loyalty of 80 percent of all Vietnamese.

Using the 1954-55 Geneva-Conference-imposed cease-fire, the CIA ran propaganda and covert operations in North Vietnam—including the implied threat of nuclear destruction—to scare and lure the minority Catholic population to migrate south. Once in South Vietnam, the CIA and the U.S. military formed them into an army, police force and government for Diem. Catholic Vietnamese never represented more than 10 percent

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of South Vietnam's total population but under Diem, a co-religionist, that small group enjoyed all status and privileges.

Through a series of operations the CIA managed to capture control of Saigon for Diem, and then the agency issued a Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE) that omitted any reference to its role in Diem's success. The SNIE proclaimed that Diem alone was responsible for his victory. Concurrent with the release of that false information, the CIA conducted a worldwide disinformation campaign portraying Diem as the miracle worker who saved South Vietnam.

From 1955 to 1960 Diem, pushed by his U.S. advisers, attempted to assert his authority over rural South Vietnam. His minions killed, tortured and imprisoned tens of thousands who resisted his unfair rule. It was this vicious repression that eventually forced the North Vietnamese to join with their compatriots in the South in the fight against Diem and his U.S. backers.

Colby's second "Vietnam" from 1964 to 1968 is the common perception of Vietnam. "Instructed

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to find, fix and fight that enemy [American servicemen] reacted with frustration and frequently fury before an enemy that only occasionally could be found." One cannot disagree with this alliterative statement.

The third "Vietnam" appears between 1968 and 1972. Colby, giving himself all credit, reserves his praise for this era—a time when he served as director of the multi-agency Civil Operations and Rural Development Support (CORDS) mission. He states, "The rural countryside was rebuilt and pacified by a revival of reliance upon village participation in defense and development"—the old, frequently recycled, unworkable Strategic Hamlet concept. "The combat was turned on the secret political enemy . . ." Here he is referring to the CIA's Phoenix program that sought out and killed or captured political opponents of Thieu's U.S.-backed dictatorship. Colby forgets to mention other realities of that era, the free-fire zones, the napalming, the bombing, the search-and-destroy missions and all the other attendant horrors of the United States fighting politicized civilians.

The fourth "Vietnam" appears from 1973 until 1975, when "South Vietnamese tactical errors . . . led this time to the total collapse before the oncoming North Vietnamese armor, artillery and